



# *Community Association of Progressive Dominicans*

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July 2, 2004

Michael K. Powell  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12<sup>th</sup> Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20554

**MB Docket No. 04-207**

Dear Chairman Powell:

The Community Association of Progressive Dominicans is the oldest Dominican-led organization in New York City, where we advocate on behalf of and provide services to one of the fastest growing communities in the City. Today, I am writing in opposition to the proposed "a la carte" cable system being considered in Congress, as it does not benefit Dominican consumers.

The finest quality of our current cable system is its ever increasing diversity. Over the past twenty years, the number of cable program networks has grown from 28 to 339, with the array of programs offered on existing networks dramatically increasing annually. With the improved diversification of programming, particularly as it relates to Hispanic-oriented and Spanish-language programming, American consumers have benefited from exposure to important channels that support varied voices, such as BET, Telemundo, TV One, ESPN Deportes, C-SPAN and The Learning Channel. Correspondingly, the viewing of cable programming has steadily increased.

The economics of the cable industry are based on licensing agreements between cable programmers and operators, the cost of which are passed onto consumers, and national and local advertising. Advertising earnings are generally based on the number of viewers a channel attracts. If a channel appeals to a specialized audience, under the "a la carte" system, its viewership will decline, as occasional viewers today would no longer subscribe. Loss of these viewers and those who might watch these channels regularly and not when offered "a la carte" will severely reduce advertising revenue and increase the cost of licensing agreements and the costs passed onto consumers.

Further, if channels do not have adequate revenue, the quality and diversification of programming will decrease. Judith McHale, President of Discovery Communications, has argued that "Discovery's award-winning networks will not exist in an *a la carte* environment and consumers will have lost the channels they regard as the pre-eminent source of high quality, family-friendly programming." Many of these channels will be forced out of business. We will no longer be able to enjoy the diverse programming of today.

An impressive and vibrant cable programming industry has developed without the need of government regulation. Cable offers consumers an incredible entertainment and educational value. Please help sustain this system. Do not support the "a la carte" proposal.

Sincerely,

Victor Morisette-Romero  
Community Association of Progressive Dominicans